

NORMAN ANIMAL WELFARE CENTER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
September 28, 2015

The Norman Animal Welfare Center Oversight Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Multi-Purpose room on the 28th day of September, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. The notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray Street on the 24th of September, 2015. The meeting was also posted on the City of Norman website.

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairperson Mark Howery called the meeting to order at approximately 6:04 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairperson Mark Howery
Jayne Crumpley
Jennifer Kidney PhD
Councilman Stephen Tyler Holman
Kathryn Bierman
Rebecca Bean

ABSENT: Ginger Noble, D.V.M.
Joe Carter, D. V. M.

OTHER PRESENT:

Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney
Rick Knighton, Assistant City Attorney
JD Younger, Major
John Bowman, Animal Welfare Supervisor
Darci Poe, Norman Animal Welfare
Jon Gary, Oklahoma City Animal Welfare

III. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 24, 2015 MINUTES

A motion to accept the minutes as is was made by Jennifer Kidney and seconded by Rebecca Bean. The motion was carried.

IV. MONTHLY STATISTICS

John Bowman went over the monthly statistics. Chairperson Mark Howery went over the wildlife numbers for clarification.

Chairperson Mark Howery asked about the animals that were confiscated from the house on west side of Norman. John Bowman said those animals were available and most of them have been adopted.

Kate Bierman asked if the volunteer hours could be broken down into the time of day the volunteers work, for instance early morning hours. She would like to know when people are volunteering. John Bowman answered that could be added but would take time to figure out how to add it.

Chairperson Mark Howery asked if there were any other questions.

V. CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Major Younger introduced himself. He said Phase Two is ongoing with masonry work and steel work to get the walls up; that may take two more weeks. He said they may have a crane on site tomorrow. If all goes well and as planned, by Oct 12th we could add the internal frame crews and roofing contractor to be on site.

Chairperson Mark Howery asked when the weekly meetings were. Major Younger answered that the meetings are every Monday at 2pm. He said they are going over the checklist and staff is documenting items to be addressed. Major Younger said the industry experts that were consulted on the building, including Scott Learned was at the shelter looking over the building on Wednesday.

VI. FOSTER PROGRAM

Chairperson Mark Howery said talk of a foster program has been in the background for a year. He said what comes to mind to him when mentioning fosters are puppies and kittens. He also said that the foster to adopt program has moved a lot of animals out of the shelter and is a fantastic program; however, now we are talking more long term. Chairperson Mark Howery said the two recent confiscations brings up this talk.

Rebecca Bean asked how many total puppies were among the 65 dogs confiscated. John Bowman answered 32 puppies. Rebecca Bean asked where they were fostered out to. Major Younger said it is important to note this was an emergency circumstance; the puppies were placed with rescue groups or private individuals with a previous relationship with the shelter. Rebecca Bean asked if the ordinances allow for emergency

placement. Major Younger said he would defer to legal and added this is not for long term fostering. Jayne Crumple said she commends the staff on doing this and has no qualms that wherever those puppies are placed, the people are taking good care of them. She asked when those animals may be available for adoption. John Bowman answered that we are working on a plan for that, but first all the animals need to get spayed or neutered. He said after they were brought in on September 11th, they all needed to be processed; things had to be documented for the investigation. John said there will be one big adoption event for those animals instead of turning them over to rescues. John said we are working on a location for that event due to the amount of public interest in the animals. There was a discussion over why we should wait to spay some of the mother dogs that are pregnant and when in term should that be done. John Bowman said the vet is continually evaluating them.

Chairperson Mark Howery introduced Jonathan Gary from Oklahoma City Animal Welfare. Jonathan Gary said every city is different in what they are able to do and that is important to keep in mind while talking about a foster program. He said having enough staff is a huge issue. He said in 2007 the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) gave them a grant to hire a foster coordinator. He said Oklahoma City hired a part time foster coordinator and a part time transfer coordinator, but discovered it was not enough. He said they also hired a supervisor for their foster program. He said a foster program is not something simple; there is a lot that goes into it, including medical support, a lot of funding, and other resources. Jonathan said they contract with two emergency veterinarians and veterinarian staff is there at the shelter daily to deal with fosters. He went over the number of animals the Oklahoma City Animal Welfare took in and how many went to foster. Jonathan said it is best to consider and talk about all that goes into a foster program up front, then going back to fix things or add things as you go. He urged us to focus on the legal things and to know our limits. Kate Bierman asked if the foster program developed from the volunteer program. Jonathan Gary said there was the volunteer program first, then the foster program developed with a group at the shelter; however, that changed in 2002 for legal reasons, and the Oklahoma City shelter took over the volunteer and foster program. Jonathan said fosters are their volunteers. Rebecca Bean asked if what they received from American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) was a one-time grant. Jonathan answered it was a two year grant, but they were fortunate that when it ran out, the city said they were going to pay for that position. Kate Bierman asked Jonathan if he thought it only took 27 hours a week to administer the foster program. Jonathan said no, at least 50 to 60 hours a week. Numbers of how many animals Norman Animal Welfare takes in in comparison to Oklahoma City Animal Welfare were discussed. Rebecca Bean said Norman would not need a full time position for a foster program. Jonathan Gary said it would take one full time person at least. Chairperson Mark Howery asked who is responsible for medical costs for the foster animal. Jonathan answered that it is not required that the foster pay for medical costs. Chairperson Mark Howery asked if food was provided for the foster. Jonathan answered that if they have donated food, it would be given for the foster animal; however, most fosters prefer to buy their own food. Rebecca Bean asked if there was someone from the shelter available 24 hours a day. Jonathan said there is a supervisor on call and two field officers. Jonathan also said they

are developing training for their fosters; they need to be able to handle the animals, so training is very important. He said it is the city's responsibility to train them.

Rebecca Bean asked how the foster program coincides with relinquishing animals to rescues. Jonathan Gary said they try to move owner relinquished animals out as soon as possible, on the same day or within 24 hours. He said they have over 100 transfer partners; last year they transferred 8500. Johnathan said they have an agreement with their transfer partners that they are required to give information as to where the animals will go.

Rebecca Bean asked if with the long range plan, could staff administer a foster program. Major Younger answered that we would have to see what resources were needed. He asked the committee to give him time to look at that. Jayne Crumpley said that may not be known until it is complete and in place. Jonathan Gary said that people you didn't plan on working on the program will be, and it will affect more staff than you realize.

Chairperson Mark Howery thanked Jonathan Gary for talking about the foster program and bringing clarity on the amount of time it takes; it is all good to keep in mind. Chairperson Mark Howery asked if anyone had any questions. Dr. Tyler asked if American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) gave guidelines for the foster program. Jonathan Gary said there were no guidelines but there was structure to the grant. He said they did it on their own with advice from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Rebecca Bean asked if the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) gave any training for it. Jonathan answered no; their part time coordinator was a student and she attended webinars on her own.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

John Bowman said there were 8,125 copies of the Spay/ Neuter program brochure that went out in the Thursday folders for Norman schools. He also announced the Fall Photo Fest at Norman Animal Welfare on Oct 17th being put on with Hands Helping Paws. He said there would be no volunteer training that day. He also spoke about the Puppies, Pies and Poems event on Nov 14th.

Chairperson Mark Howery explained how the public comments will be heard and why. He gave his email address to anyone who would like to email him with comments.

Sereta Wilson with Annie's Ruff House said she has worked with Jon at Oklahoma City Animal Welfare and has also worked with Moore during emergencies. She said she would like to see Norman use their resources and make a plan for emergency situations. She asked if Norman Animal Welfare is fully staffed or adequately for the shelter.

Chairperson Mark Howery said there is only a certain amount of positions can be approved by city council.

Major Younger said council approved the veterinarian technician position and that person starts Oct 2nd which will open another position.

Angie with Groovy Paws Rescue said there is a lot of liability with a foster program. She said they do home visits. She said she would be happy to share events on Facebook for Norman Animal Welfare.

Lauren Lackey displayed and explained her poster board regarding potential fosters for Norman. She said there is a need for a true foster program which in turn would reduce euthanizing animals. She said if there was a true foster program, the owner surrenders could go directly to foster homes. She said it is mind boggling to her that the lady got one of her 65 dogs back. She said the lady should not be allowed to get one of her animals back. She asked why there is only one charge against this person when there should be hundreds.

Emily Nichols asked why we would have the adoption event for the puppy mill dogs off site and not the regular dogs when they have wanted to try to get to off-site adoption events for years. She said she is confused as to why the shelter would have a problem to spay those pregnant dogs when the shelter spays the regular dogs when they are pregnant. She sent an email out to staff and others with 21 rescue organizations listed to take the animals, but she never got a reply. (Emily reads the email that was sent.)

Sereta Wilson with Annie's Ruff House said she did go down to the shelter to say they were available to help. She said in future a plan should be in place to do what is needed in this situation.

Chairperson Mark Howery said this is the first time in a long time something like this has happened with this magnitude.

Darcie Woodson said the major problem with the foster program is how to pay for it. We need to think outside the box to pay for the foster program. She said on the City Pet License brochure, it says 100% of the funds from city pet license goes to the adoption fund but it really goes to the general fund. She said if people knew it went to fund a foster program, she thinks more people will purchase city pet license. She asked if there is a way to purchase city pet license online rather than getting them at the veterinarians where the vet would get 50% of the money. She said she would like to see the \$60,000.00 donation go to purchase reusable supplies for the foster program. She said we could have an online donation and set up an Amazon account for people to buy things for the shelter and to have it shipped directly to the shelter. She said the cities see a liability with bites regarding the foster program, but wouldn't it be the same process for animals in the foster to adopt program.

Bill Hickman said one: he would like to see on the next agenda a report of needed staff for council, and two: defined terms on statistics; the terms are not defined in the ordinance change. There are existing terms to be used that aren't being used. Three: he would like to see the volunteer hours broken down, as in court ordered or citizen volunteer. Four: would encourage the committee to read the resolution.

(Emily Nichols continues reading email.)

Rick Knighton said we are not responsible as to what the news says. He said there are a number of issues that have to be resolved before one of these dogs goes out the door. Emily Nichols said she has asked multiple times what is happening and does not get an answer.

Rick Knighton said you put staff in a difficult position. He said call me if you have questions. Rick Knighton said there is a process to follow. He said we have done this before; we know how to do this. He said there are specific provisions in the law that tells us what to do in this circumstance.

Emily Nichols said transparency is the issue the public is facing.

Rick Knighton said to please call him if you can't get answers.

Rebecca Bean said she would like to see standard operating procedures for situations like this if it happens again so fosters and/or volunteers can help the staff and the animals, so we will have a list of people who can help.

John Bowman said he would too. He said he would like staff to initiate sending information out for help instead of someone else who is not involved in what is going on.

Jeanne Snider said we can't solve this tonight. We will make a better plan, there is a lot to do, and we are doing the best we can do at this time. She said we all care about this.

Kate Bierman said it all comes back to communication.

Jayne Crumply said we all want the same thing; it can't be done overnight and we have to work on things.

Bill Hickman said the citizens did vote; the only way is to hold that vote accountable is through our city council members.

Rebecca Bean said we want the new facility to be running and staffed. She said hopefully we can work together towards that.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jennifer Kidney at approximately 8:36p.m. The motion was seconded by Jayne Crumply, the motion was carried.

ATTEST:

Mark Howery Co-Chairperson

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